



## Drought Update

### Monday, May 11, 2015

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#### **CURRENT CONDITIONS**

**Recent Precipitation:** Over the last week, limited portions of the Central Coast, Central Valley and Sierra Nevada range experienced between a quarter-inch to two inches of precipitation.

Below are estimates of precipitation totals (in inches) from May 4 through May 11, and year-to-date rainfall based on the water year cycle (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015).

- **Bakersfield:** 0.00" (4.61")
- **Folsom Dam:** 0.20" (29.89")
- **Fresno:** 0.28" (6.13")
- **Hetch Hetchy:** 1.15" (18.87")
- **Los Angeles:** 0.21" (7.67")
- **Modesto:** 0.17" (10.15")
- **Oroville:** 0.00" (25.84")
- **Pacific House:** 0.52" (28.44")
- **Redding:** 0.00" (31.04")
- **Riverside:** 0.18" (4.41")
- **Sacramento:** 0.19" (13.77")
- **San Diego:** 0.51" (7.04")
- **Shasta Dam:** 0.00" (48.92")
- **Willits:** 0.00" (37.92")

**Precipitation Forecast:** The coming week outlook remains dry for much of the state. Beginning Monday, a weak storm system will move into the North Coast, travelling into northern Nevada, and exiting the region by midweek.

**Snow Survey:** As of May 11, [automated snow sensors](#) captured the statewide average snowpack conditions at just 1 percent of the average to date. Regionally, the Northern Sierra Nevada is at 1 percent of average, the Central Sierra is at 1 percent of average, and the Southern Sierra Nevada is at 1 percent of average.

**Reservoir Levels (% capacity):** Since May 1, Central Valley reservoirs from Shasta and Trinity in the North to Isabella in the South had a net loss in storage of 230,611 acre-feet, with total gains being 19,538 acre-feet and total losses being 250,149 acre-feet. Shasta Reservoir decreased by 55,110 acre-feet, while San Luis Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, decreased its storage by 43,331 acre-feet.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of May 10 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 32% of capacity (36% of year to date average); Don Pedro 41% of capacity (55% of average); Exchequer 11% of capacity (18% of average); Folsom Lake 58% of capacity (75% of average); Lake Oroville 48% of capacity (58% of average); Lake Perris 39% (47% of average); Millerton Lake 36% of capacity (50% of average); New Melones 20% of capacity (32% of average); Pine Flat 23% of capacity (35% of average); San Luis 59% of capacity (69% of average); Lake Shasta 57% of capacity (66% of average); and Trinity Lake 45% of capacity (54% of average). An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

**Fire Activity:** Since the beginning of the year, CAL FIRE has responded to over 1,278 wildfires across the state, burning 5,133 acres in the State Responsibility Area. This fire activity is above the five year average for the same time period with 757 fires and 4,805 acres burned. CAL FIRE will continue to augment resources throughout the state in preparation for the peak fire season.

**Open Burn Bans:** Burn bans were lifted throughout the State during the winter, while restrictions on burning remained in place in many areas. As the state transitions to the dry season, open burn bans are once again being implemented in certain counties. Recently, [burn bans were instituted](#) in Fresno, King, Monterey, San Benito, Tulare County and Marin County.

**Vulnerable Water Systems:** The State Water Board [Division of Drinking Water Programs](#) continues to provide technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state. As of this week, approximately \$14.7 million has been committed for specific emergency drinking water projects out of \$15 million appropriated early last year for this purpose. Additional funds to continue assisting emergency projects have been appropriated by the recent emergency drought legislation announced this past March.

### **KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK**

- **State Water Board Adopts 25 Percent Mandatory Water Conservation Regulation:** On May 5, the State Water Board [adopted an emergency regulation](#) which requires an immediate [25 percent reduction](#) in overall potable urban water use statewide in accordance with Governor Brown's April 1 Executive Order. A 25 percent savings in potable urban water use amounts to more than 1.2 million acre-feet of water over the next nine months, or nearly as much water as is currently in Lake Oroville.

Since the State Water Board adopted its initial emergency urban conservation regulation in July 2014, voluntary statewide conservation efforts have reached 9 percent overall – well short of the 20 percent Governor Brown called for in 2014.

- **CPUC Orders Water Companies to Implement 25 Percent Conservation Measures in Response to Drought:** On May 7, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) ordered private water suppliers under its jurisdiction to [comply with emergency water use regulations](#) adopted by the State Water Board on May 5. This will help safeguard California's remaining potable urban water supplies in preparation for a possible fifth year of drought.
- **Construction Begins on Emergency Drought Barrier in Delta:** On May 8, the Department of Water Resources announced that the beginning of [construction on the temporary emergency drought barrier](#) on the West False River in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The barrier will help to block saltwater from flowing into the central Delta and avoid contaminating water supplies for millions of Californians during a fourth consecutive summer of drought.
- **Governor Brown Addresses ACWA Conference:** On May 6, Governor Brown attended the Association of California Water Agency's (ACWA's) Spring Conference and provided remarks. Governor Brown emphasized that state actions in the coming years on water will have lasting implications for generations to come, and cautioned that droughts may become more frequent and longer lasting amidst climate change. He also referenced the importance of improving the reliability of the state's water conveyance system through newly announced [California WaterFix](#).

- **Prop 1 Updates:** Work continues on the implementation of Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014, which authorizes \$7.545 billion in general obligation bonds to fund ecosystems and watershed protection and restoration, water supply infrastructure projects, including surface and groundwater storage, and drinking water protection.

For new updates regarding implementation, visit the [Bond Accountability](#) websites or sign up for the [Prop 1 Listserv](#). New items have been added recently to the “featured links” column, including a new [Prop 1 Contact Sheet](#) for each of the bond programs.

- **State Water Board Finalizes New Desalination Facility Standards:** On May 6, the State Water Board approved an amendment to the state’s Water Quality Control Plan for the Ocean Waters of California (Ocean Plan) to address effects associated with the construction and operation of [seawater desalination facilities](#). The amendment sets the criteria for the use of ocean water as a supplement to traditional water supplies while protecting marine life and water quality.
- **CDFW Awards \$21 Million in Grants for Greenhouse Gas Reduction Projects:** On April 30, the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) announced the selection of 12 projects that will receive [grant funding to restore wetlands](#) that sequester greenhouse gases (GHGs) and provide other ecological benefits. The grants are CDFW’s first distribution of funds, for California’s cap-and-trade program for combating climate change, and represents additional steps to addressing climate change impacts on the state’s biodiversity.
- **USDA Announces \$235 Million Available for Innovative New Conservation Partnerships:** On May 4, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced an investment of up to [\\$235 million](#) to improve the nation’s water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat and protect agricultural viability. USDA continues to look for new opportunities to address drought across the West, and this initiative allows local partners the opportunity to design and invest in conservation projects specifically tailored for their communities.

The funding is available to being made available through the [Regional Conservation Partnership Program \(RCPP\)](#), the newest conservation tool of the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

- **Diverse Coalition Negotiating Historic Venture to Reintroduce Salmon to Sierra:** On May 7, the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), in coordination with several agencies and conservation groups, is working to develop the Yuba Salmon Partnership Initiative which will be the [first-ever “collect and transport” program](#) in California to move salmon around dams too tall for fish ladders. The program would return spring-run Chinook salmon and possible steelhead to more than 30 miles of the North Yuba River.

The [Yuba Salmon Partnership Initiative](#) seeks to accomplish a major goal set forth in Governor Brown’s California Water Action Plan. This five-year plan, released in January 2014, spells out actions needed to restore California’s key ecosystems, and bring greater resiliency and reliability to its water resources.

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental, and Utility Assistance:** The Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 633,400 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 574,400 boxes of food have been picked up by 302,567 households. By May 15, an additional 10,800 boxes will be delivered to Fresno, Kern, Santa Cruz, Tulare, and Yolo counties.

The non-profit group La Cooperativa continues to distribute the \$10 million state-funded emergency rental assistance to impacted families and individuals across counties most impacted by the drought. As of April 30, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$8,732,469 have been issued to 5,908 applicants in 21 counties, with \$24,531 remaining in assistance funds.

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) allocated an additional \$600,000, under the federally-funded Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), to continue the [Drought Water Assistance Program \(DWAP\)](#) pilot project which provides financial assistance to help low-income families pay their water bills. This program targets low-income families in 10 counties identified as experiencing a high unemployment rate, high share of agricultural workers and designated to have “exceptional” drought conditions according to the U.S. Drought Monitor Classification System. As of April 30, CSD has reported that a total of \$28,396 has been issued to 160 households.

CSD is in the process of allocating \$400,000, under CSBG, to continue the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) drought assistance program, which provides assistance in employment training and placement services to individuals impacted by the drought. This program has been provided in coordination with the California Human Development (CHD), Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC), and Center for Employment Training (CET) and Proteus, which provides employment training and placement services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers suffering job loss or reduced employment due to the drought. CSD is finalizing contract terms with these organizations and anticipates services to begin June 1, 2015.

- **California’s Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** The Save Our Water public education campaign launched a second phase of “Keep Saving CA” radio ads that include a series of endorsement spots read by local on-air talent expressing the benefits of a “shower song” that lasts five minutes or less. These ads will run through the end of the month. This week’s Association of California Water Agencies conference in Sacramento featured Save Our Water prominently, with more local water districts recruited to join the Keep Saving CA campaign. Thus far more than 15 agencies have committed financially to the campaign in their area.

The Keep Saving CA campaign pats Californians on the back for their efforts thus far to save water – and urges them to conserve even more. It will run through the end of June and includes billboards, outdoor media, traditional and digital radio, digital and social media, and on-the-street efforts that will be seen and heard throughout the state. The campaign includes a robust new website loaded with easy-to-use water-saving tips at [saveourwater.com](http://saveourwater.com). Save Our Water connects with Californians on its [Facebook](#) page, [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

- **Drought Response Funding:** The \$687 million in state drought funding that was appropriated last March through emergency legislation, as well as \$142 million provided in the 2014 Budget Act, continues to advance toward meeting critical needs. To date, \$468 million has been committed, and nearly \$625 million of the emergency funds appropriated in March came from sources dedicated to capital improvements to water systems. Since March, the Department of Water Resources has expedited grant approvals, getting \$21 million immediately allocated to grantees that were pre-approved for certain projects.

As planned in March, the next \$200 million of expedited capital funding was awarded in October, and the remaining \$250 million will be granted by fall 2015. The 2014 Budget Act appropriated an additional \$53.8 million to CAL FIRE over its typical budget to enhance firefighter surge capacity and retain seasonal firefighters beyond the typical fire season. As a result of continuing drought conditions, emergency legislation was enacted in March that appropriated over \$1 billion of additional funds for drought-related projects and activities.

- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

### **Local Government**

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 56 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
  - **26 Counties:** El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Plumas, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
  - **10 Cities:** City of Live Oak (Sutter County), City of Lodi (San Joaquin County), City of Manteca (San Joaquin County), City of Montague (Siskiyou County), City of Portola (Plumas County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), City of San Juan Bautista (San Benito County), City of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara County), and City of West Sacramento (Yolo County), and City of Willits (Mendocino County).
  - **9 Tribes:** Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County), Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria (Sonoma County), Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (Madera County) Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe (Mendocino County), Tule River Indian Tribe (Tulare County), Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (Yolo County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt County).
  - **12 Special Districts:** Carpinteria Valley Water District (Santa Barbara County), Goleta Water District (Santa Barbara County), Groveland Community Services District (Tuolumne County), Lake Don Pedro Community Services District (Mariposa Stanislaus County), Mariposa Public Utility District (Mariposa County), Meiners Oaks Water District (Ventura County), Montecito Water District (Santa Barbara County), Mountain House Community Service District (San Joaquin County), Nevada Irrigation District (Nevada County), Placer County Water Agency (Placer County), Tuolumne Utilities District (Tuolumne County), and Twain Harte Community Services District (Tuolumne County).

- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies (AWCA) [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 31 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** A total of 4 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians (Sonoma County), Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt and Del Norte County).

#### **DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION**

##### **[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse**

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)  
Local Government, [Drought Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)

California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)  
California Department of Water Resources, [Current Water Conditions](#)  
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)  
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)  
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)  
State Water Resources Control Board, Drinking Water, [SWRCB Drinking Water Program](#)  
California State Water Project, [Information](#)

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Current Conditions throughout the Region  
[U.S. Drought Portal](#), National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)  
National Weather Service [Climate Predictor Center](#)  
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)  
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)  
U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance Office: [www.sba.gov/disaster](http://www.sba.gov/disaster)